

2006 Session Report

Representative Bob Sump
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

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Rep. Bob Sump

7th Legislative District

406 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7908
sump.bob@leg.wa.gov

Toll-Free Legislative Hotline:
1-800-562-6000

Committee Assignments

- State Government, Operations & Accountability
- Technology, Telecommunications & Energy
- Select Committee on Hood Canal

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April 2006

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2006 legislative session came to a close in March. The best word to describe the 60-day session is intense. We hit the ground running on January 9 and never let up the entire session. With that intensity came some accomplishments as well as some disappointments.

The following session report highlights some of successes we had this session, as well as some of the issues I think the majority party should have handled better for Washington taxpayers.

As always I look forward to hearing your views on the issues that are of concern to you. Please feel free to contact me at any of the contact numbers or via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Bob Sump
State Representative



How to stay informed:

There are plenty of ways to stay informed on issues important to you.

Information on the Internet:

State government: www.access.wa.gov
Legislative information: www.hrc.leg.wa.gov

Understanding the legislative process:

- Go to the House of Representative's web site: www1.leg.wa.gov/house/
- Click on "General Info"
- There you will find the "Guide to Effective Legislative Participation" and information about the law-making process

Other ways to get information and assistance:

Session may be over but I represent you all year. I would be happy to speak to your group, organization or school. Topics might include:

- Issues before the Legislature.
- How does the legislative process work?
- What it's like to be a legislator.
- Issues specific to the 7th District.

Don't forget, legislators are elected to serve you. If you are facing challenges working with a state agency, contact me to see how I can help.

Creating safe neighborhoods by protecting children from sex offenders ...

Nothing is more important than keeping our families safe. A success from the 2006 session is the passage of House Bill 3277, which will protect children from sex predators. The new law imposes stricter sex offender sentences and increases the monitoring of sex offenders, as well as curbs the abuse of special sentencing guidelines.

HB 3277 imposes a 25-year sentence for several offenses against children younger than 15, developmentally disabled people and older, vulnerable adults. Teachers, coaches and clergy are also subject to the sentences along with treatment, under the measure.

One of the things we didn't accomplish however was cracking down on sex offenders who target their relatives. They are still eligible for dramatically reduced sentences. I believe they should be treated the same as any other sex offender and based on the phone calls, e-mails and messages I received there are many victims who feel the same.

I supported another bill, Jessica's Law Plus, named in memory of little Jessica Lunsford who was murdered in 2005. Jessica's father Mark traveled from Florida to testify in favor of our bill which would have included tougher sentencing for every perpetrator who victimizes a child or a disabled person, including family members. Although this tougher bill didn't pass, the final bill signed into law is much stronger than what we started with and I'm proud that we were able to make it tougher. I'll work hard next year to strengthen the law even more.



Rep. Sump met with Mr. Lunsford to discuss legislation to crack down on sex offenders.

Additional meth enforcement on its way to 7th District...



Methamphetamine production and use is a major public health and safety issue for the entire state and is particularly rampant in rural communities like ours. We need all the resources we can get our hands on to do battle against this highly addictive and dangerous drug. Meth use leads to a lot of other serious community problems, such as damage to the environment, domestic violence, drug-addicted children, child abuse and neglect, and identity theft.

Helping strengthen family farms

Local farmers struggle against the increasing cost of fuel and fertilizer, as well as rising taxes. I joined my Republican colleagues to support and help pass legislation that provides tax exemptions on farm machinery and fuel. We also worked to broker a deal that eases the "use it or lose it" water policies in the Odessa aquifer region. These policies are important steps to help agriculture thrive in our state.



Lack of accountability in state operating budget...

Our main priority this session was to make minor adjustments to the biennial budget by adopting a supplemental operating budget. The objective of a supplemental budget is to account for any unanticipated spending on things like increases in school enrollment or transportation costs for school districts due to higher gas prices, or natural disasters like forest fires, floods and earthquakes.



When we began the session with increased money coming into the state treasury due to a slowly improving economy, it set the stage for another spending spree for the majority party.

The additional revenues proved too tempting for the fans of big-government in the Legislature, and the governor and majority party chose to increase state spending by 17.7 percent over the 2003-05 budget.

Even if revenue growth stays steady it will push the state into debt. At least \$468 million in this budget is tied to new or expanded programs. This could lead to a billion-dollar "bow wave" of increased costs when the Legislature comes back next session to create the 2007-2009 operating budget. That's simply irresponsible. It puts taxpayers at risk for tax increases or cuts in services. I'm concerned with the lack of discipline in how tax dollars have been spent.

2006 election-year mailing restrictions

Due to election year mailing restrictions, my ability to communicate with the people I represent is severely limited. Therefore, this will be my final legislative report to you until next December.

I am, however, allowed to respond to ALL specific, written requests from the citizens of the 7th District. If you would like to be updated on issues of importance to you, please send a letter or an e-mail to my office regarding your interest, and I'll be happy to provide you with the information you need.

